We all know people who randomly toss the phrase, "my son, the doctor," into conversations invoking a little inward eye rolling and a subject change. A few months ago, Lyn Knowles hesitantly mentioned that her son, who happens to be a doctor, had gone on a humanitarian mission to Panama and she wondered if the subject might possibly be of interest as a visiting lecture. This was far from the usual "my son, the doctor" proclamation! And knowing Lyn, she wouldn't broach the subject, albeit shyly, unless her son was guaranteed to be very informative. How right she was!

Dr. Martyn Knowles, is a vascular surgeon who teaches at The University of Texas Southwestern Medical School and whose surgeries are performed primarily at Parkland Hospital. Dr. Knowles, a graduate of the University of North Carolina and Wake Forest Medical School, is married with a beautiful baby girl. He proudly showed us a picture!

Although obviously happy with his family and career, a few months ago Dr. Knowles decided he needed to do something to remind himself of why he originally wanted to be a doctor. So, after doing some investigation he found an organization which ticked all his requirements called Floating Doctors. The mission of Floating Doctors according to the web site is "to reduce the present and future burden of disease in the developing world, and to promote improvements in health care delivery worldwide."

So, not letting any grass grow under his feet, this past May Dr. Knowles flew into Panama, managed to finagle medical supplies through customs, and boarded a very creaky looking boat which took he and his colleagues close enough to the jungle so they could get off and hike six hours to a village where medical doctors had never been.

Their boat is called the Southern Wind. After laying unused for a number of years it was donated to the Floating Doctors and extensively renovated by volunteers. It carries and houses the relief volunteers and the crew.

Soon after arriving, a little boy cut his toe off with a machete in a village a few hours further into the jungle so off Dr. Knowles and his friends went to do surgery without all the usual instruments.

(con't on page 2)
Welcome to the many new SAIL members and all those who continue to enrich their lives by expanding their horizons with the many courses that are offered. If some of the classes seem more crowded, that is because almost six hundred people have enrolled -- another new record.

Our new liaison with Collin College, Jim Merritt, is introduced elsewhere in this issue. Our thanks to the Continuing Education Department of the college for the use of day time classrooms, audio visual and other services. Jean Martin is our dedicated Collin College coordinator who keeps everything running smoothly.

Throughout the year the SAIL curriculum, social and membership committee volunteers are working hard to produce a quality program for all of us. A big thank you to all who donate their time and talents. With the increased membership, Shellie Lewis has stepped forward to volunteer several days a week and more than a full work week of hours during the registration period to assist Jean with her greatly increased work load. Many thanks, Shellie.

Please read carefully the new registration week guidelines (December 15th to December 19th) for the upcoming spring semester. Our courses fill up quickly. We have maximized the daytime space available to us and are doing our best to accommodate your wishes.

Enjoy the semester!

(continued from page 1)

Fortunately or unfortunately, depending on how you look at it, Dr. Knowles brought video of the surgery, which was successful. Also, he showed video footage of the boat, the village huts, the residents, both human and insect, and his colleagues.

Dr. Knowles' commitment to improving the quality of life in remotely located people through improved health care was evident throughout his presentation. What also struck me was the respect all of the Floating Doctors volunteers demonstrated for the culture of the indigenous community.

Our thanks to Lyn Knowles for sharing her son with us and thank you to Dr. Martyn Knowles for taking the time to share Floating Doctors with SAIL!

-- Muriel Dean
Our New SAIL Liaison - Jim Merritt

Collin College recently chose Jim Merritt to be the liaison between the college and SAIL. Jim is a 15-year employee of the college, working in the continuing education and workforce development area. Jim manages such diverse curriculum subjects as fine arts, creative writing and English as a second language. His goal is to see students better equipped for whatever job they seek.

Although Jim lives in Richardson, he is a native of Plano. His grandfather owned and operated a barber shop in downtown Plano. Check out the building with the Merritt name across the second story façade. The Merritt family is still active in Plano’s old settlers events along with other well-known families.

Jim is a graduate of Texas A&M with a teaching degree. He taught for a number of years in the area before going to work for the college. Following in his father’s and grandfather’s footsteps, he has become a Mason, which is his main charity focus. He has two daughters; one is 16 years old and the other is 20 years old. His older daughter is a student attending Texas Tech.

In what little spare time Jim has, he enjoys wood burning. We will look forward to seeing his work at our next art show.

-- Ann Grant

New rules:
Registration for Spring 2015 to be held the week of December 15 - 19

With 598 students enrolled in classes this semester, registration is becoming increasingly difficult and time consuming. In an effort to streamline the process, we plan to conduct registration for one week, December 15 - 19.

You can still register by mail, fax or in the SAIL office. If you are going to be out of town you can submit your material early and your registration will be mixed in with whatever comes into the office on Monday, December 15. Late registration will be permitted, but you can expect that many classes will have been filled by then.

We have always allowed students to register for any number of classes for one fee. When choosing your classes we ask that you think carefully about whether you really plan to attend all of them. Students are increasingly being turned away from popular classes due to huge enrollments that sometimes fail to materialize.

We realize that absences are unavoidable and are to be expected. However, it has reached the point where in some classes we have no idea how many to expect. This is unfair to the instructors as well as to the staff and volunteers who work so hard to bring you this wonderful program and all of these marvelous teachers.

To accommodate 175 SAIL students, Fred Smith taught a second session of “Zionism and the Rise of the Israeli Nation”

Spring Registration, Dec. 15 - 19
Schedules will be mailed and posted online by December 8
Classes begin January 20, 2015
Welcome to SAIL, Fall 2014

Mary Ann Brown, sponsor of the SAIL Food Drive

Janice Schieffer, President of the Collin County League of Women Voters (second from left)

Instructor Judy Tyler with one of her three Bridge classes

Roundup, September 2014